TOUCHING STORY IN LOWLY

Liza's Lout-From Advance Sheets of the March Cornhill-The Scene Laid is in Devonshire, England.

They halled from Devonshire, both Liza and her Lout. She was a short, sturdy, raw-boned toly-poly damael with a face shining with good nature and yellow soap. He was a sulky, blackbrowed, unprepossessing specimen of the Bill Sikes order of humanity, boasting, however, of the highly incongruous Christian name of Arthur, or rather "Orthur," to adopt Liza's own pronunciation. With regard to his profession it was something to do with a cart, though what might have been that cart's particular line of business I am unable, after lapse of time, to denote. It might have been a mud-cart, or a dust-ditto; it might equally well have been connected with the coal interest or have been chartered for the convey ance of building materials, or dabbies In drain pipes, or taken a hand in pav ing-stones. All I do know is that the cart used to go ploughing up the middle of the road, with the Lout slouching along at the side, with his hands in his pockets, and a general expression of dogged determination not to take them out unless driven to it.

As to Liza, she was "a general," or what in former times was known as maid-of-all-work. There was no slouch ing about her, and no half measures Her invariable method was to go at everything head foremost, and see what came of it-a proceeding that was not without results from the family porce-lain; indeed, "Liza, her mark," might have been traced upon most of the household gods.

Still, there was no getting over the fact that she meant well, in spite of the dearth of jug-handles and the harvest of cracks and mutilations which marked her domestic progress.
"I never see the like," she would ex-

plain tearfully; "if I only looks at the things they falls down and breaks their-

She and Orthur had known each other all their lives. If they had not exactly grown in beauty side by side, it was owing to nature having placed stumbling blocks in the way when she endowed Liza with a turnip-shaped visage and a turn-up nose, at the same time that, having roughly sketched in Orthur's features with a very blunt pencil, she had stamped the design with the most truculent, ready-made scowl she had in stock.

Not that Liza was conscious of there being any room for improvement in his expression. They had been neighbors' children and she had seen him scowl his way up from boyhood; her own youth having been passed in a galleyslave sort of existence, chained to an oar in the shape of a perpetual baby, while he had slouched and hung about with his hands in his pockets, accepting her homage as his lawful due, at the same time levying tribute-such as the largest bite out of her apple, or the first suck at a bull's eye-until that day when Liza, having grown up as well as she could, came to London "to better

herself." The fact of her success in securing a situation, to which was attached the handsome emolument of f12 per annum, having been wafted on the wings of rumor to distant Devonshire, was responsible for the reappearance of the Lout upon the scene, burning not so much with a desire to "better" himself as to obtain the maximum wages for a

modicum of work. Although it is possible that in this faudable design his luck was—in Liza's opinion, at least—less than his deserts, he nevertheless succeed in obtaining the nondescript post previously alluded to Marrying, however, under eighteen shilweek, was considered inadvisable; the more so as Liza had set her heart on commencing housekeeping on quite an ambitious scale,, with no less

than four chairs and a set of tea-trays. To this end she devoted all that could ssibly be laid aside from the yearly £12. Orthur, as a superior being requiring beer and baccy ad lib., could not naturally be expected to contribute anything to the fund. It was also requisite that his food should be not only ample, but administered at intervals of clockwork regularity; whereas Liza re-garded meals more in the light of tireme interruptions, and dinner in particular as a movable feast, or a species of passover to be partaken of standing, with your sleeves tucked up and loins girt in the intervals of blacking grates or cleaning windows.

Still, as far as could be judged, the course of true love, as exemplified in the persons of Lize and her Lout, ran with tolerable smoothness. If the latter was not an ardent wooer, neither was the former an exacting finances, be-Ing quite content when her Sunday out allowed her the privilege of walking by his side and responding deferentially to such remarks as were growled out once in half a mile or so,

And thus it went on-Liza slaving and saving, and the Lout gorging and guzzling-until a change came over the scene in consequence of the advent of a third person. This was none other than a younger sister of Liza's-name of Looheaser-for whom the former had succeeded in obtaining a position as

Looheaser, she be that sick and tired o' the country, and see a bit o' life she must and will if 'tis ever so.'

So Looheaser, aged seventeen (there were nearly ten years between them and half that number of brothers and sisters), having packed her box and secured the overflowings in a blue-spotted handkerchief, came up to London to see life from behind a perambulator.

She was on a larger scale than Lizasmarter, perter, more highly colored, and actually sported a fringe. Liza, put the further inquiry, "Did he give it who had not seen her since she herself out bold? Could you 'ear the names plain?"

"Loo bit." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it." Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it." Loo it. "Loo it." Loo it. "Lo

"Lor, Looheaser," she exclaimed, "ow you've gone and growed! Why, Orthur won't never know yer!"

All the same, it was Orthur's opinion, transmitted through the medium of that "Looheaser, she'd come on wonderful, and he shouldn't be s'prised if she didn't pick up a young man of it pretty easy.

DEVOTION, tears came into her eyes, and ended by going to tell yer as I've made up my reaking a teacup in honor of the oc ision, as though she were toasting cocheaser after the most approved fushion of the last century.

One result of this was that when Sunlay came round the original duet became a trio, for, as Liza herself put it, "Looheaser didn't know nobody, and hey couldn't let a gal of 'er age go look after Looheaser, and any'ow Orthur, he didnt' mind. 'Deed, he 'ad said as he didn't know but what it didn't make things livelier, and, lor, the way that gal enswers 'im back, you never ear the like. Why," in mingled admiration and horror, "she thinks nothink o contrydictin' 'im to 'is face, she don't and cheeks 'Im, she do, till you'd think he'd get right down mad. And when I ups and tells 'er t'other night as she didnt' oughter go on so, he says, 'Let 'er be,' he says, and mind my own bizniss, as she's but a gal as'll steady down soon enuff. Well," with a dubain't right, only I'm 'arf afeared as our easer's a bit flighty."

Months went by, and, so far from howing any tendency to settle, as had een prognosticated, Looheaser became even more and more daring in her doogs, crowning all by the purchase of and feather that almost took away Liza's breath; while Orthur, wiping his mouth appreciatively with the back of his hand, observed that "that was somethink like, and why couldn't Liza smarten 'erself up a bit more while

"Liza, indeed!" with a toss of the be-plumed head; "a fine guy she'd look one. No, let her stick to 'er old black onnet, sich as she (Looheaser) wouldn't emean 'erself by wearing. It was good nuff for the likes o' 'er. Perhaps it was hardly to be wondered

at that, now and again, Liza would return from one of these Sunday evening expeditions somewhat dispirited. It was not only Looheaser's dressiness, out her way of jeering at her elder sister before the Lout, that the former found rather hard to bear. Once or wice she even got so far in her own mind as to wish that Looheaser had stayed safely down in Devonshire, instead of coming to see life and making n invariable third at these interviews which had been strictly tete-a-tete.

Still, there was balm in Gilead, or rather in the old stocking containing her hard-carned savings, which savings had by this time attained such a high the first darn in the leg.

For Liza's ambition had soured above the four chairs and the tea-trays, and now almed at nothing less than a round table with a shiny top, which was to support a flower pot and saucer set in the centre of a white crochet mat.

"Looheaser, she crowshays lovely, and 'll get 'er to make me one with fringe all round

Apropos of whom it was remarkable that, in spite of the hat and feather, she had not yet succeeded in picking up young man of her own-or, if she had, kept him very dark. Liza, having put the question to her plain one day, was mewhat surprised at the outburst of giggles with which it was received.
"Maybe I 'ave and maybe I 'aven't,"

only answer vouchsafed on pressing the inquiry. "Lor, Liza, what trick to serve you!"
a goose you be!"
"So it ain't no joi Orthur's behavior was queer, too,

ugs of the heart. "He be as touchy as a box o' lucifers, and no pleasin' on 'im nohow. Looheas-er, she justs lar's in 'is face; but then

she's that darin' as I never see the

to be much perturbed, or, as she would have expressed it, "put about." Vague forebodings filled her mind, and she Altogether, poor Liza was beginning felt all the world as though somethink was goin' to 'appen"-a presentiment that was shortly justified by the breakng of a looking glass; and the most ignorant person living knows that is bout the worst misfortune that could befall one. Consequently it was with a delighted astonishment too great for vords that she, not long after, heard Orthur growl out something to the ef-fect that he'd "jist 'ad 'is wages riz 'alf a crown a week, and she'd better notice so as they could be married Eas-

ter Monday." Liza blushed a light purple, while her ars seemed to stand out on each side of her head as much as to ask, "Can we believe our own testimony at this unexpected proof of the honorableness of the Lout's Intentions?"

'Lor, Orthur, why, you never mean it!" she exclaimed bashfully as soon as she recovered speech. "Whatever's made yer take like that all of a suddent?

"I wanter get it over," was the surly of a vague sensation as though her inpermost feelings had corns and some ne had trodden on them.

However, it wore off, and having given the required hotice, she set about the pleasing task of getting her "things" ready. In the exuberance of her emo-tions it must be admitted that breakages occurred with monotonous regu larity; jugs relinquished their spouts almost at sight, and teacups turned ed republicans in the matter of handles. In fact, Liza's proposed path to the altar might be said to have been trewn with broken crockery.

Excitement culminated on that Sunday when she was to be "asked in hurch" for the first time. To be sure she was unable to be present, having her dinner to see to, but Looheaser whose duties were of a lighter nature was deputized on the occasion, and calld in on her way back.

"How did it sound, Looheaser? The latter, struggling with mirth that emed to border on the hysterical, was inderstood to utter the word "uncom-

Liza's face was one broad grin as she

"Orful plain," was the answer, cul-

minating in a choke.
"Lor, Looheaser," slapping her vign! Did-did folks stare or seem took

aback, like?" Looheaser couldn't say, but on the whole was inclined to think they took act as mediator, and matters seemed to be going from bad to worse, when,

"I wish I could a gone myself," sighed Liza chuckled fondly over this speci-her sister regretfully; "I jest should nen of his wif." is though "The highdear o' Looheaser, 'er as I guess should a-jumped when my name and Orthur's was give out. Lor,' that would be hard to the at, not so recovered herself, and before he could much on the score of size, perhaps, as follow it up with another, the cradle such a gal for carryin' on—and I was for other distinctive qualities, such as was empty and Liza was gone.

mind to be married in a halpacker. I did think of a meriny, as you know, out now I've come to turn it over, seems o me a halpackers' genteeler, and I shall 'ave it made fash' nable, with three rows of- But there, it's no good talk-

n': von won't take nothink serious." Liza was very busy and very happy luring the next week or two. Not only gaddin' off alone. 'Sides, she'd prom- were there her "things" to see to, but ised mother, down in Devonshire, to there were the four chairs and the round table with the shiny top to be purchased. The tea-trays were not included in the outlay after all, as "the Missis" was going to make her a present of a set. Altogether Liza was jubilant, so much so that the lack of reciprocity on the part of the Lout was oms in a back street, and Liza, having paid a visit of inspection and arranged the table and chairs-not to mention the tea-trays-to the best advantage, was as charmed by the result as to declare that "It only wanted the flower pot in the window to make it lous shake of the head, "I don't say he look real 'an'some." (The flower pot in question being an absentee merely i sequence of the intending purchase not having bee able to arrive at a de cision as to the conflicting merits of a 'geranyum" or a "fewcher.") She only wished "Mother down in Devonshire"

could see it all! Easter Monday broke as though with the intention to do honor to Liza's wedding day. It was on the very stroke of eleven-just as she, arrayed in new and wonderful garments, with perfectly as ounding bonnet on her head, and al her boxes and belongings packed and corded ready to be sent after her, was saying, "Thanky'm," in answer to the missis' "I wish you well, Eliza," that there came a knock at the door. "That'll be Looheaser, I shouldn't

vonder," observed the bride-elect. But it proved to be a slatternly gir with a dirty face and a missive to match, which she tendered with the

cursory, "Ere y'are." There was no direction beyond thumbmarks, and as Liza examined it she marvelled much, audibly as well as in wardly, as to its import. Finally, hav ng stripped off the outer cover, a scrap of paper was revealed on which a few es were scrawled in a hand that might have been a foot from the per-sistent manner in which it ran down hill after the signature that brough up the rear.

Liza, whose education had, for family easons, been of the most rudimentary and fragmentary order, spelt it ove level of prosperity that they were up to with difficulty. As she did so it appeared to the onlooker that her face became not so much pale as mottled. Then she looked round her in a stunned sort of

> "I never was much of a 'and at readin' writin'," she murmured. "Maybe I aint' made it out right, of maybe it's jest 'er fun. She's full o' fun, is our She handed the document to her mis-

"If yer wouldn't mind jest castin' yer

This was how it ran. "Liza.-Me and Arthur was married this mourning. It was our bands as was put up all along. We'll keep the furnycher as you won't have no use for, and will come in 'andy. 'LOUISA. "Oh, poor Eliza, what a shameful

"So it ain't no joke, you don't think? Then guess I may as well be takin' off about this time, and occasioned his these yer things, and, seein' as you ain't long suffering sweetheart many searchwell stop on if agreeable."

That was all, except that, as she turned away, she muttered, with a little catch in her throat, "Looheaser

And so the alpaca was taken off and put carefully away. Liza "didn't a'pose by her. Indeed, during the whole of the ensuing week she worked like a horse, submitted everything in her vicinity-from the children's faces to the

dish-covers-to such a power of friction that the eye sought in vain the relief of an unpolished surface to rest This was the only sign she gave, and opinions were divided as to whether she really felt the blow she had reelved so uncomplainingly.

"Surely you never mean to let them keep the furniture that you bought with your own money?" she was asked. "Well, I dunno," was the answer 'twould be of no good to me and I aln't got nowhere to put it, and I know Looheaser thought no end o' that ound table, so I reckon I'll let it be."

After this things went on about as isual, except that Liza took to going o chapel Sunday evenings instead of walking out." It was also observable that she broke less; what was more, she and Looheaser "made it up." The live branch, having been held out by reply that made the recipient conscious the latter, was at once grasped, and the ontract ratified by a formal tea-drinking, at which Liza enjoyed the doubtful pleasure of sitting on one of her own chairs, and watching Loohenser, who gtggled more than ever, preside at the tea-tray to which she could also lay

The first meeting between Orthur and her was freer from the element of embarrassment than might have been ex-

"Hullo, Liza, old gal!" was his greet "come to see 'ow we're a-gettin Looheaser 'n me we give you the but we don't bear no ill-feelin' Take a cheer an' make yerself at 'ome. "Thanky, Orthur," was the meek ge "I'm much obliged, I'm sure, and

I'm glad to see you 'n' Looheaser both Liza took back quite a glowing account of her visit. "Looheaser 'n' Or-

thur was as friendly as friendly, and the round table looked beautiful." But as the months were on a little cloud appeared upon her brow, and she was regretfully compelled to allow that things were not going so well as they might in those two rooms in the back

"Looheaser," with tears she admitted it, "Looheaser was flighty, and too fond o' dress and gossipin' with the neigh ors, while Orthur, 'stead o' puttin' up with 'er ways and givin' 'er time to settle, let 'er 'ave the rough side of 'i ngue, and was a deal too often at the public-'ouse at the corner.'

More than once was Liza sent for to fortunately, a digression was caused by the advent of the baby.

Such a wonde sul baby! One indeed

general intelligence and lung power. ne as squalled more, while as for tak- patchwork counterpane, was an effect

was godmother. 'Name this child?" "Orthur, bless 'Is 'eart."

The officiating clergyman looked ouzzled for an instant, as though doubting whether this might or might not

e a second name. For a brief while all went well. Looleaser took a pride in the baby, whose vells were quite a feature of the neighorhood, the Lout kept away from the almost into her old form. How long this halcyon condition of affairs might | four shillin' a week." have endured but for the advent of the piano-organ man it is impossible to

He was a picturesque, good-looking vagabond of the usual Italian type, with ear-rings in his ears and a gay olored handkerchief round his neck to et off his olive complexion. He made als appearance in the street one day when Looheaser was tired of nursing mind raisin' me a pound or two. Yer the baby, who was bored to death with see," hastily, "I could make it up to the cutting of his first tooth. The or- yer in other ways. I'd give up my beer gan struck up a waltz and the baby a owl simultaneously.
"Hold yer noise, do," said his mother,
and let's 'ear a bit 'o moosick."

zirl-for she was not yet twenty-as she stood there with the child in her arms, Her high coloring appealed to his southern temperament, and he showed his white teeth in a grin. She smiled back at him. "Lor, what a 'an'some chap, and nothing to do all day but turn a 'andle. I do wish Orthur was like 'im. Drat you!" to the baby, who had just reached a passage marked "crescendo" in a vocal obligato that bid fair to drown the instrument alto-"Will you 'a-done? Ain't I Then, encouraged by another admiring glance, she tossed her foolish young head with a gratified simper.

After this the man came regularly every week, in addition to which Looheaser, when she heard the sound of the organ in the distance, would fake the baby and stroll in that direction. It was not long before the neighbors (bless them?) began to talk. They said "sleh conduck on the part of a married yoman was purfeckly disgraceful, that

And so it filtered round to Liza's ears, and she-not that she believed a word of it, not she-ventured to interrorate Looheaser timidly on the subject, was up in arms at once, and 'wanted to know 'ow she dared, jest ecause she was fond of a toon, the man was civil-spoken, spite o' bein' a furriner, as wasn't 'is fault, and she was sick and resid of her life, that she was, and wished she'd never been born, let alone married, and the baby that fractious she hadn't no rest day nor night. And her own sister to take and turn agen her, which was a thing she'd never 'ave believed; but there, she s'posed it was done outer spite cos of avin married Orthur, as had gone on ever set eyes on-" concluding by bursting into noisy tears, while the baby lifted up his voice in sympathy, and Liza felt herself to be an utter bar-

This was bad enough, but there was vorse to come. A heavy, lurching step without was followed by a dark, slouching body blocking up the doorway, and a thick, beery voice, demanding "What bout a blanked organ-grinder as was always 'angin' round an' soft-sawderin' 'is missus, who'd better look to 'erself if he ketched 'er up to sich games. While as for that doubly adjectived with grief-sodden eyes upon a blurred furriner, he'd better be quick and sheer and watery world, and refused to be or the fust time he come acrost 'im he'd give 'lm sich a pair o' black eyes as he wouldn't be able to see outer fur

a month." Over the rest of the scene I prefer to east a vell. Suffice it to say that Liza returned home with a bump on forehead, the presence of which she volubly accounted for by having struck her head against "the mankle shelf." For some while after this she was extraordinarily downcast, going about with the air of one who anticipated the worst. One day it came. White and preathless she rushed into her missis' sence and gasped out the terrible tidings that "Loohea er'd gone-took everythink she could lay 'ands on and gone away with that orgin-grinder chap, leavin' the baby be'ind 'er, and go she (Liza) must that very minnit, for Orthur'd be comin' 'ome to 'is tea and no knowin' 'ow he'd take it, per tickler if he'd been 'avin' a drop; he might even be for doin' that precious

There was no holding her back, and so, with her bonnet pitched on anyhow, nd not even stopping to turn down her sleeves. Liza started forth on her mision of love and peril. At six o'clo he outraged husband returned to his lesolate home. Liza trembled and ugged the baby closer. The first lance told her that he had been drink

"Where's Looheaser?" he growled 'gaddin' as usual? If that gal don's ake 'n' mend 'er ways, I'lk..." Then she broke it to him from behind bulwark of baby. "Gorn! boilted

oked it an' left the bloomin' kid bend er-In an instant semi-intoxication had given way to brutal frenzy, "Glv" it ter me-gimmy the brat, I tell 'ee, an'

I'll chuck it outer winder. I won't ha ought o' hern." But Liza, having deposited the small reature in its cradie, stood before it short and dumpy, with her rough red arms-not long out of the washing-tub -outstretched after the fashion of a guardian angel.

"You shan't do it, Orthur! Do 'ee isten to me a bit and—" There was a murderous glance in the es that confronted hers. 'Gimmy that there babby-d'ye 'ear? or 't'ill be the wuss fur yer.' "Orthur, you'd never go to 'urt the

retty hinnercent, as it's not 'is fault as

All the dormant brutality of the man's lowest nature was upstirred. "I'll larn yer to come 'ere a-hinterfer in' in my 'ouse-you as I chucked off like a old shoe. You to stand up ag'in me an' cheek me to my face! Take

That was a heavy blow that sent he

The return of the latter, with her lip She reckoned "you'd 'ardly meet with cut, accompanied by the baby in

n' notice --- '' Liza's vocabulary was tive overture to the impassioned requite unequal to the strain put upon it. quest that "the missis would let her There were great doings at the chris- keep it jest one night, till she could find ening. Liza-who even went so far as some one to take care of it. A better o don the alpaca in honor of the event baby nor a quieter never breathed, though, maybe, a bit fretful-and no wonder, through being waked out of 'is leep so suddent

Testimony to this effect on the part of the said baby being taken as read, and permission accorded, Liza laid the luck-less infant in her narrow bed, and vowed a vow which was more or less of a paraphase of the old Biblical one-"Though yer father and mother forsake yer, Aunt Liza won't." Next day public-house, and Liza broke a dish and the baby was put out to nurse with a a basin, and seemed to be getting back decent, motherly woman, who promised lecent, motherly woman, who promised "to do for 'im like he was 'er own at

"But how in the world are you going to pay the money?" it was asked. "Why, it will swallow up nearly the

vhole of your wages!" Liga, thus interrogated, betrayed a

dight embarrassment. "I was thinkin'," she remarked, roll- OFFICES-878 CHAPEL STREET, ing her blushing arms up in her aprop "I was thinkin' as p'raps yer wouldn' willin', an' I dunno but what I'd soon get uster doin' without sugar in my tea What's more, I always did say as I'd est as soon 'ave drippin' on my bread The organ-grinder looked up at the as butter. It's what we was all reared on, an' I don't doubt it's a deal whole

From the first the father cast off all esponsibility. "Blow the babby!" was his response to an appeal to the effect that he would contribute something to-wards the maintenance of his offspring Blow the babby! Take it to the wuck

ters by taking himself off no one knew whither; so that the entire burden feV upon one pair of anoulders, which never to 'ave a minnit's peace? I'm sturdy as they were, soon began to feel most sick of it all, that's what I am." themselves overweighted. In spite of the many sacrifices cheer-

fully undergone, it was a tight fit to eep that baby going at all. Notwithstanding his aunt's repeated asseverations to the contraty, he had been a child from the first, and sconer did he find himself bankrupt in respect of parents than he proceeded to ut himself through a course of infan tile ailments which were as exhaustive o his own constitution as they were to his aunt's exchequer. Measles, bron chitis-anything and everything that came in his way-that baby appropria ted as a matter of course. Liza shiv ered all through one winter in a thin threadbear jacket so that he might wallow in cod-liver oil.

"Really," said her mistress, "I shall have to speak to Eliza about her ap-pearance. I don't believe she has spent penny on herself for the last year Her boots are all broken and her cotto dresses nothing but patches. I shall hate doing it, but she must be made to understand, once for all, that the baby is not everything."

This, however, was the one fact of all others that the mind of Liza refused to grasp, and what would have been the upshot is not easily surmised had not the drink agen, and she wished she'd the knot of the difficulty been eventu ally severed by the individual most esnnerned. The baby, not content with having sampled most of the allments peculiar to his kind, now proceeded to engage in

single handed combat with the cro All through the long hours of one night he fought vallantly for his life; then, when morning came, realizing all at once the futility of the struggle, he haid down his arms and went to look for etter luck in another world. Liza pawned the alpaca dress to help bury him, and, having sunk every available penny in crape, looked out

and watery world, and refused to be comforted because now there was no ne to whom to offer herself up a living sacrifice One day a gleam of brightness sho across the grayness of her mental out-look. It was caused by the sight of

the old empty stocking which had one istituted her savings bank. "I'll begin puttin' by agen," she said herself. "Maybe Looheaser'll be comin' back some day. She knows I'd never be the one to cast it up in 'er

and there sin't nobody else to stand by 'er. So Liza is silently hoarding up love and money in the fond hope that one day she will be called upon to lavish both upon the outcast.

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